

Broadcasting Board of Governors

§ 503.1

§ 503.1 Introduction and definitions.

(a) Introduction. The FOIA and this part apply to all records of the Broadcasting Board of Governors including all of its foreign posts. As a general policy, Broadcasting Board of Governors follows a balanced approach in administering the FOIA. We recognize the right of public access to information in the possession of the Department, but we also protect the integrity of the Department's internal processes. This policy calls for the fullest possible disclosure of records consistent with those requirements of administrative necessity and confidentiality which are recognized by the Freedom of Information Act.

(b) Definitions—*Access Appeal Committee* or *Committee*, means the Committee delegated by the Department Director for making final Department determinations regarding appeals from the initial denial of records under the FOIA. This Committee also reviews final appeal denials of documents made by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for its records.

Department or *Broadcasting Board of Governors* means the Broadcasting Board of Governors. It includes all components of Broadcasting Board of Governors in the U.S. and all foreign posts abroad (known as the U.S. Information Service or USIS). (See 22 CFR part 504, chapter V—Organization.)

Commercial use, when referring to a request, means that the request is from or on behalf of one who seeks information for a use or purpose that furthers the commercial, trade, or profit interests of the requester or of a person on whose behalf the request is made. Whether a request is for a commercial use depends on the purpose of the request and the use to which the records will be put. The identity of the requester (individual, non-profit corporation, for-profit corporation), or the nature of the records, while in some cases indicative of that purpose or use, is not necessarily determinative. When a request is from a representative of the news media, the request shall be deemed not to be for commercial use.

Department means any executive department, military department, government corporation, government controlled corporation, any independent

regulatory agency, or other establishment in the executive branch of the Federal Government. A private organization is not a department even if it is performing work under contract with the Government or is receiving Federal financial assistance. Grantee and contractor records are not subject to the FOIA unless they are in the possession and control of Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Duplication means the process making a copy of a record and sending it to the requester, to the extent necessary to respond to the request. Such copies include paper copy, microform, audiovisual materials, and magnetic tapes, cards and discs.

Educational institution means a pre-school, elementary or secondary school, institution of undergraduate or graduate higher education, or institution of professional or vocational education.

FOIA means section 552 of title 5, United States Code, as amended.

Freedom of Information Officer means the Broadcasting Board of Governors official who has been delegated the authority to release or withhold records and assess, waive, or reduce fees in response to FOIA requests.

Non-commercial scientific institution means an institution that is not operated substantially for purposes of furthering its own or someone else's business, trade, or profit interests, and that is operated for purposes of conducting scientific research whose results are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

Post or *USIS* means all overseas offices of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Records (and any other term used in this section in reference to information) includes any information that would be a Department record subject to the requirements of this section when maintained by the Department in any format, including an electronic format. Records also include any handwritten, typed or printed documents (such as memoranda, books, brochures, studies, writings, drafts, letters, transcripts, and minutes) and documentary material in other forms (such as punchcards; magnetic tapes, cards, or discs; paper tapes; audio or video recordings;

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maps; photographs; slides; microfilm; and motion pictures). It does not include objects or articles such as exhibits, models; equipment, and duplication machines or audiovisual processing materials. Nor does it include books, magazines, pamphlets, or other reference material in formally organized and officially designated Broadcasting Board of Governors libraries, where such materials are available under the rules of the particular library.

Representative of the news media means a person actively gathering news for an entity organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. “News” means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. News media entities include television and radio broadcasters, publishers of periodicals (to the extent they publish “news”) who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public, and entities that may disseminate news through other media (e.g., electronic dissemination of text). Freelance journalists shall be considered representatives of a news media entity if they can show a solid basis for expecting publication through such an entity. A publication contract or a requester’s past publication record may show such a basis.

Request means asking in writing for records whether or not the request refers specifically to the Freedom of Information Act.

Review means examining the records to determine which portions, if any, may be released, and any other processing that is necessary to prepare the records for release. It includes only the first examination and processing of the requested documents for purposes of determining whether a specific exemption applies to a particular record or portion of a record.

Search means looking for records or portions of records responsive to a request. It includes reading and interpreting a request, and also page-by-page and line-by-line examination to identify responsive portions of a document. However, it does not include line-by-line examination where merely duplicating the entire page would be a

less expensive and a quicker way to comply with the request.

[59 FR 5706, Feb. 8, 1994, as amended at 63 FR 67576, Dec. 8, 1998]

§ 503.2 Making a request.

(a) *How to request records.* All requests for documents shall be made in writing. Requests should be addressed to the Broadcast Board of Governors, Freedom of Information Officer, GC/FOI, room M-301 4th Street SW., Washington, DC 20547. Write the words “Freedom of Information Act Request” on the envelope and letter.

(b) *Details in your letter.* Your request for documents should provide as many details as possible that will help us find the records you are requesting. If there is insufficient information, we will ask you for more. Include your telephone number(s) to help us reach you if we have questions. If you are not sure how to write your request or what details to include, you may call the FOIA Office to request a copy of the Department’s booklet “Guide and Index of Records,” or access the same information via the Internet on Broadcasting Board of Governors’ World Wide Web site (<http://www.usia.gov>). The more specific the request for documents, the faster the Department will be able to respond to your request(s).

(c) *Requests not handled under FOIA.* We will not provide documents requested under the FOIA and this part if the records are currently available in the National Archives, subject to release through the Archives, or commonly sold to the public by it or another agency pursuant to statutory authority (for example, records currently available from the Government Printing Office or the National Technical Information Service). Department records that are normally freely available to the general public, such as Broadcasting Board of Governors World, are not covered by the FOIA. Also requests from Federal departments and court orders for documents are not FOIA requests, nor are requests from Chairmen of Congressional committees or subcommittees.

(d) *Referral of requests outside the Department.* If you request records that were created by or provided to us by another Federal department, we may